

The background features a complex network of thin, light-colored lines connecting various sized circles. The circles are colored in shades of blue, teal, and green, with some appearing as solid colors and others as faint outlines. The overall effect is a dynamic, interconnected pattern that suggests a global or networked theme.

# **Education of refugees in Europe: lessons learned and promising practices**

Schools For All

Integration through Education - European Perspectives

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**Lessons learned from studies on  
previous second generations for  
the education of recently arrived  
refugee learners**

# Immersion is better than separation

- Time spent in separate classes for learning the host country's language should be limited to a minimum period of time – depending on age and grade.
- Integrate newly arrived learners from the start or once there is a basic knowledge of the host language
- Social environment of native-speaking peers is an important element for speeding-up the learning process.
- Immersion requires informed concepts, accompaniment and sufficient personnel.



## **It is more likely for refugee learners to stay than to return: Invest in their future**

- Every period of time not invested in children's education is wasted time with implications for even higher costs and efforts at later stages.
- Many children and families will stay for good.
- The element of costs and efforts is not 'only' relevant for the children themselves but also for the countries they came to.



**AN INVESTMENT IN  
KNOWLEDGE  
ALWAYS PAYS THE  
BEST INTEREST**  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

## The phenomenon of migration is most probably not temporal

- There will most likely be a constant influx of children of very diverse backgrounds and legal statuses also in the years to come.
- For this influx adequate institutional responses are needed.
- The challenge is to advance from the ad-hoc-measures taken in reaction to the immediate emergencies to more permanent structures and concepts that presume high levels of heterogeneity in classrooms as the most likely normality of schools also in the future.



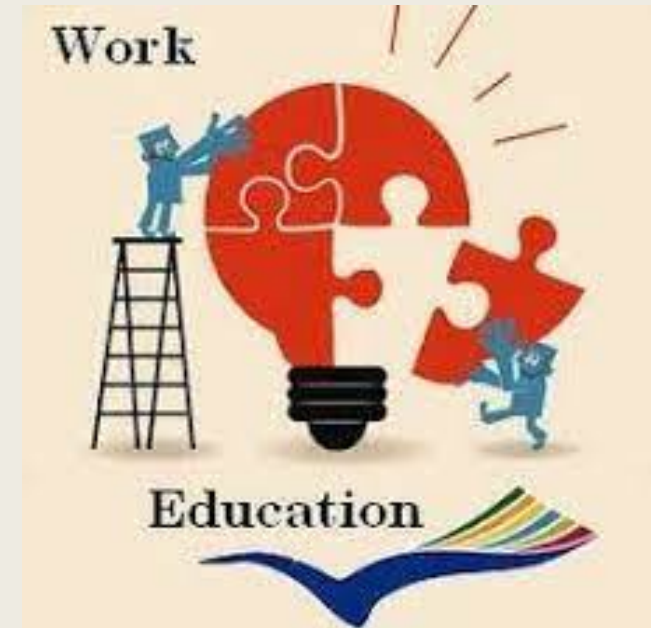
# Education does not end at age 16 or 18

- ‘Late bloomers’, i.e. students who only towards or after the end of compulsory education discover their ambitions and possibilities, tend to be more frequent among immigrant children than their native-born peers.
- There may be good reasons for educational careers gaining momentum only at later stages.
- Step-by-step careers into higher education can also be a valid alternative to straight pathways via academic tracks.
- While the age limits for compulsory education are frequently not applied too strictly in ongoing educational trajectories, they can make quite a difference when newly arrived youth are placed into the existing system or denied access at all.



## Foreigners' and asylum legislation should not overrule perspectives of education and work

- Throughout the past decades, foreigners' and asylum laws were regularly powerful enough to represent serious obstacles to educational perspectives and possibilities for work.
- At the same time, all destination countries of refugees and immigrants in Europe are in need of young people – as labour force, as future high-skilled talents, and as taxpayers.
- Offering a residency status on the basis of having found access to vocational training or to higher education can be considered a triple-win situation.




## Minors of age have a universal human right to education

- Children's right to education is independent from their status, background and current country of residence.
- Immediate access to education should be granted as soon as possible after the arrival
- Refugee children cannot be offered 'second class-education', but they must receive the support needed to succeed, and must be protected from discrimination.
- Access to schools must also be guaranteed for children without any legal status: schools must be exempted from any obligation to report them and their families to the immigration authorities.

**EVERYONE HAS  
THE RIGHT TO  
EDUCATION"**

ARTICLE 26, UNIVERSAL DECLARATION  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)





**Examples of promising practices of  
holistic refugee education in  
Europe (the Netherlands and  
Germany)**

## Language Friendly School (LFS), Rutu Foundation for Intercultural Multilingual Education, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

- Aims to address the increasing multilingualism present in schools and societies due to migration flows.
- In LFSs, all languages spoken by students, parents, and other school stakeholders are welcomed and valued.
- Bottom-up whole school approach that is adjusted to the context of the school by developing a language plan that involves all school members (i.e., students, teachers, and the rest of the school staff) for an inclusive and language friendly learning environment for all students.





## Commitments of LFSs

To not prohibit, discourage or punish the use of other languages at school.

To not prohibit or discourage parents to use own languages at school.

To not advise parents to use a different language at home with their children.

To nominate a Language Friendly School Coordinator.

To develop a Language Friendly School plan together.

To not allow exclusion or bullying around languages, dialects or accents.

Let's make a Language Friendly School plan together. Be inspired by the examples below from other Language Friendly Schools

### School level

Draft an anti-bullying plan that includes languages, dialects and accents

Inform the whole school community about the importance of home languages

Facilitate after-school language activities

Create awareness of multilingual language acquisition and development

Discover all the languages spoken within the school community



Foster teacher-parent collaboration to support childrens' learning

Facilitate meetings where parents can use their home languages

Make each of the languages visible

Encourage students to become language ambassadors

Create a language friendly library

Facilitate communication in different languages with parents

### Classroom level

Make room for students' home languages as part of the learning process

Offer regular training and professional development to improve language friendly classroom strategies

Make each of the students' languages visible in the classroom

Reflect as a team on our own norms, values and attitudes towards language, cultural, and ethnic diversity



Encourage all students to develop their whole language repertoire, including dialects and accents

Inform teachers on the role of home languages in learning additional languages.

Promote written, oral, gestural, and graphic students' communication

Share and regularly update our approaches and the materials we use with our team

Find ways to provide instruction in the various languages present in school

# Holistic elements of LFS

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## Learning needs

- Multilingual teaching
- Inclusive teaching
- Ambassador programme

## Social needs

- Use of mother-tongue and multiple languages
- Involvement of parents and community
- Ambassador programme

## Emotional needs

- Use of mother-tongue and multiple languages
- Involvement of parents and community
- Ambassador programme



**Praxiserprobung für  
geflüchtete Jugendliche  
(Practical Learning for Refugee  
Youth, PE), Berlin, Germany**

Young refugees aged between 15 and 20 for whom neither the continuation of a welcome class or the enrolment in a mainstream secondary school setting appear as promising opportunities (based on students' prior education, German language competences, advanced age of arrival in Germany (between 14 and 20-years-old at the beginning of their attendance of the welcome class) and/or other factors.

## Goals of PL

- To offer a targeted way of preparing students for their transition into vocational training and work > opportunities of learning and practical introductions in school and companies through methods of “Productive Learning”
- Combination of learning in school with practical work in companies.
- Learning and teaching in school are strongly based on the experiences gathered through the practical work.
- Facilitates learning for students who have difficulties in following classroom-based teaching methods.



## Elements of PL

*Orientation stage:* 6-8 weeks are dedicated to adjusting to the structures, build groups, provide individual counselling and identify practical learning places.

*Language and practical learning:* 3 days a week are dedicated to learning in practical learning spaces such as companies and institutions and 2 days a week to learning in the classroom.

To foster systematic language learning, the activities and communication happening in practical learning places are used for learning and practicing German language competences.

*Individual learning plans:* Learning goals are identified, and students' future educational and professional pathways are planned jointly with educators and students.

*Social and cultural integration:* Promoted through sessions where students reflect in groups on practical and personal experiences, e.g., concerning values, norms, democracy, and laws foster social and cultural integration.

*Support of the teachers and educators:* Provided through training and guidance



# Holistic elements of PL

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## Learning needs

- School and practical learning with a focus on German language acquisition
- Professional orientation and preparation

## Social needs

- Small group size
- Reference people and educational assistants
- Individual development plans

## Emotional needs

- Exchanges about (traumatic) experiences as refugees in a safe environment

## Patenschaftsprogramm (Buddy-Programme), Stiftung Bildung, Germany



- Young people between 4 and 19-years-old.
- Buddy team partnerships involve children, young people, families, kindergartens, schools (welcome classes and mainstream classes) and sponsoring associations.
- Buddy teams do a variety of activities together: learn German language together, do free-time trips, study for school as a team, share every-day activities, do sports or play, go the theatre or movie theatre, play music, or celebrate festivities together.
- A contact person of the Stiftung Bildung is available for each buddy team.
- Stiftung Bildung offers supervision, seminars, and information events to support the teams.

# Holistic elements of Buddy Programme

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## Learning needs

- Language learning and subject support with buddies
- Involvement of schools

## Social needs

- Connecting with peers and making friends through buddy teams

## Emotional needs

- Buddy/peer relations